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June 25, 1956

To: Dr. John B. deC. M. Saunders
Chairman
Administrative Committee for the San Francisco Campus

From: Dr. Earl R. Miller
Chairman
Committee on the Clinical Use of Radioisotopes and of Radiological Safety

In answer to your letter of June 8, 1956 re certain problems of radiation safety and the Committee on the Clinical Use of Radioisotopes and Radiographic Safety:

In paragraph 1 of your letter, it is stated ". . . . your Committee is specifically charged with the responsibility of maintaining local safety." The maintenance of safety within a department is the function of the head of that department, not of our committee. Our committee has the responsibility for advising the deans on policy matters with regard to radioactive materials, and examining applications for the use of radioisotopes and either passing or rejecting them for the deans.

The heads of the various departments in which radioactivity is used cannot escape the responsibility for the safe use of this material in their departments. It would be well that someone in the University be designated as local officer for Radiation Safety to act as consultant to the various department heads for interpretation of data and aiding them in the maintenance of safety. This is in agreement with the suggestion made by Dr. Stone in his letter of May 23, 1956. The functions of such an officer are well stated in the memorandum from Dr. Reynold Brown to Dr. Stone, dated March 30, 1956.

In the first paragraph of your letter it is stated that ". . . all work in the hospital concerned with the use of radioactive material would be confined to the 12th floor." If this were applied strictly, then even tracer work would have to go to the 12th floor. This regulation should apply only to larger amounts of radioactive material. In the letter of April 25, 1955 from Mr. Hall and Dr. Lagem to the department heads, it is stated that "all patients who have received more than 30 millicuries or milligrams of radioactive material must be kept on this ward (12th floor) until the treatment is finished, or the material has decayed or has been eliminated to such an extent that transfer of the patient is considered safe." I would like to suggest that this action as given completely in the letter of April 25, 1955, be reconfirmed by you and your committee with a correction in the last paragraph deleting Dr. Low-Beebe's name and substituting that of Dr. Glenn Sheline.

Concerning what action should be taken about the use of large amounts of radioactivity in places other than the 12th floor, we believe that the reconfirmation of the April 25, 1955 letter followed by a statement specifically to Dr. Traut that this action must be adhered to, would settle the problem.

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To: Dr. John B. deC. M. Saunders

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If this were not settled, we believe it would be incumbent upon Dr. Stone to withdraw permission for the use of radium and other radioactive materials from the Departments of Obstetrics and Gynecology. By action of the Committee on Clinical Use of Radioisotopes and Radiologic Safety the responsibility for the handling of radium, cobalt, and other fixed isotopes used for external, intracavity, and interstitial radiation (radon seeds, etc.) was vested in the chairman of the Department of Radiology. It would seem to follow that (a) it will be Dr. Traut's responsibility to see that the 12th floor is used, or failing that, that Dr. Stone withdraw permission for the use of radium, or (c) that the Committee withdraw from Dr. Stone the power to grant permission to the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology for the use of this material.

In your second paragraph concerning the course of indoctrination for nursing personnel for handling patients on the 12th floor area, it is a local officer for Radiation Safety is appointed and his responsibilities are as stated in the letter from Dr. Brown to Dr. Stone, the educational aspect mentioned in this paragraph will be taken care of.

Our committee believes the Administrative Committee should appoint a local officer for Radiation Safety. We would recommend Dr. Reynolds for this position.

E. D. Wells

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